

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

S21
A87F3

100-1000

S

Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington, D.C. 20250 (202) 720-4330

Letter No. 2585

November 20, 1992

AGRICULTURAL TRADE OFFICE OPENS IN MEXICO -- Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Ann M. Veneman was present for the opening of a new U.S. agricultural trade office in Mexico to help American farmers and agricultural exporters tap the growing Mexican market. The office will be operated by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service and will promote the sales of U.S. agricultural products in Mexico and serve as a contact point for Mexican importers seeking to buy products from the United States. Veneman said much of the recent growth in U.S. farm exports to Mexico is attributable to Mexican trade liberalization that began in 1987 and to economic benefits accruing to Mexico as a result of those reforms. Veneman added that ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement would further increase U.S. agricultural exports to Mexico because it will eliminate all tariffs, quotas and licenses that act as barriers to trade between the United States and Mexico. Contact: Lynn K. Goldsborough (202) 720-3930.

GYPSY MOTH PROGRAM -- USDA is asking for public comment to help update its management strategy to control the destructive gypsy moth. "For a solid, effective management strategy, it's essential we involve the public in our analysis of a national gypsy moth program," said F. Dale Robertson, chief of USDA's Forest Service. Gypsy moths annually defoliate over four million acres of federal, state and privately-owned forests and shade trees and threaten millions of dollars worth of natural resources. USDA is looking at new ways to prevent damage to the 287 million acres of U.S. forest land susceptible to the gypsy moth. Comments referring to the gypsy moth program should be sent no later than March 15 to John Hazel, USDA Forest Service, 5 Radnor Corporate Center, 100 Matsonford Lane, Suite 200, P.O. Box 6775, Radnor, PA 19087-4585. Contact: John Hazel (215) 975-4150.

RUBBER-MAKING PROTEIN DISCOVERED -- Scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service discovered that the Indian rubber tree, an ornamental plant found in American homes, makes rubber using the same type of cell protein as commercial rubber-producing trees grown overseas. The discovery moves the scientists closer to genetically engineering plants as a domestic source of high-quality natural rubber. The ornamental's protein, LPR, is an important new clue to the mostly unsolved puzzle of how plants manufacture rubber. The U.S. annually imports about 1 million tons of natural rubber, worth about \$1 billion, to make tires, surgical gloves and other products. Most commercial natural rubber comes from latex that is hand-tapped from plantations in Malaysia and Indonesia. Currently, the U.S. lacks the necessary combination of climate and inexpensive hand labor to duplicate this type of production. Contact: Marcia Wood (510) 559-6070.

CORN CROP -- Corn for grain is forecast at a record high 9.33 billion bushels, up four percent from last month and 25 percent above the 1991 crop. Contact: Charles Van Lahr (202) 720-7369.

PREVENTIVE TESTING FOR ALTERED PLUM TREES -- Scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service are experimenting with a gene that could prevent U.S. plum trees from a virus now damaging orchards throughout Europe. Plum pox virus, one of the most serious diseases of plums and apricots in Europe, is presently not in this country, but scientists are hoping to have insurance against the virus should it appear. The potential increase of travel and exchange of goods between the United States and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union heightens the risk of this disease striking orchards in the United States. Contact: Doris Stanley (301) 504-8767.

QUARANTINE TO STOP PINE SHOOT BEETLE -- USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is restricting the movement of pine products from 42 infested counties in Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Pennsylvania, New York and Indiana. Pine shoot beetles were first discovered in July on a Christmas tree farm in Ohio. The beetle attacks new shoots of pine trees, stunting their growth. Scientists add that the pine shoot beetle feeds on trees growing outdoors and there is no danger should a beetle get inside a person's home. Contact: Robin Porter (301) 436-6573.

NITROGEN BOOSTS SOYBEAN YIELDS -- Scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service have been working with Australian scientists to see if treating irrigated soybeans with extra nitrogen could increase yields. The result was 100 bushels per acre, compared to unfertilized soybeans averaging 80 bushels per acre, and normal nonirrigated yields at 30 to 40 bushels per acre in Australia and 40 to 50 bushels per acre in the U.S. Scientists say the study shows the next major barrier that must be overcome, in order to increase soybean yield and production efficiency in high-yield environments, involves the plants' uptake and use of nitrogen. Contact: Ben Hardin (309) 685-4011.

RISE IN FOOD COST DECLINES -- Retail food prices rose less than 3 percent in 1991, halving the 1990 price increase of 5.8 percent. Food prices rose more slowly at supermarkets and other grocery stores than at restaurants, reversing the trend of the previous four years. The cost of doing business in 1991 rose slowly, and as a result food industry charges for food processing and distributing services went up less in 1991 than they had in 1990. The two main reasons cited for the slowdown were record meat supplies, generated by increased livestock and poultry production, and the recession cutting into consumer buying power and food spending. Contact: Denis Dunham (202) 219-0870.

HYDROPONICALLY-GROWN VEGGIES -- Vegetable crops are thriving under irrigation from waste water used to raise cold-water fish. Scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service harvested lettuce and strawberries from hydroponically grown plants fertilized with rainbow trout effluent. Quality was as good as that from conventionally grown plants. An added benefit of this system is a plant-based waste water treatment system to alleviate pollution generated by aquaculture facilities. Contact: Fumiomi Takeda (304) 725-3451.

*Editor: Carol Childers
R-TV Fax: (202) 690-2165
Ag NewsFAX (202) 690-3944*

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA # 1850 -- John Snyder looks at the growing importation of foreign, farm raised shrimp, the effect that trade has on the shrimp industry and the dietary, health and economic implications for U.S. consumers. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME # 1332 -- The milk controversy; mail order gift shopping; removing toxic metals from wastewater; mail order foods and federal funeral regulations. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1841 -- USDA news highlights; options pilot program; U.S. meat export outlook; during the "transition," and the changes ahead. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1547 -- New vaccine possibilities; microscopic warfare; acid-tolerant sorghum; Appalachian forage hunt and cockroach biocontrol. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Monday, November 30, ag prices, world sugar situation, world tobacco situation and world dairy situation; Tuesday, December 1, horticultural product exports and first day coverage of USDA's outlook conference; Wednesday, December 2, extensive coverage of USDA's outlook conference; Thursday, December 3, more outlook conference stories. These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m., ET, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

FEATURES -- Pat O'Leary reports on USDA's upcoming Outlook Conference and Will Pemble reports on environmentally friendly pesticide research.

ACTUALITIES -- Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan talks to farm broadcasters in a USDA-Radio news conference on GATT and other issues; USDA chief meteorologist Norton Strommen updates U.S. crop and weather conditions and USDA economist Gary Lucier on vegetables and specialty crops.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- Chris Larson reports on SCS efforts to clean up Florida after Hurricane Andrew by converting debris to wood chips; Pat O'Leary on USDA's W.I.C. food assistance program; Lynn Wyvill on starch encapsulated pesticides, and DeBoria Janifer reports on carbonated milk.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- Agriculture Update, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

Available on Satellite Galaxy 6, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz.: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., ET, Saturdays from 10 - 10:30 a.m., ET, and Mondays from 8 - 8:30 a.m., ET.

OFFMIKE

TWO MAJOR QUESTIONS...confront producers in central California, says **Walt Shaw** (KRAK, Sacramento, CA): will winter temperatures freeze out the white fly infestations; and will winter storms produce sufficient moisture for the 1993 growing season. Walt says citrus is ready to be harvested, and the naval orange crop looks especially good. Several producers will supply the specialty packers. They demand the best oranges and pay premium prices.

CONGRATULATIONS...to **Roddy Peeples** (Voice of Southwest Agriculture Radio Network, San Angelo, TX). Roddy was selected as the Farm Broadcaster of the Year at the annual conference in Kansas City, MO of the National Association of Farm Broadcasters. Along with the award is an expense paid trip to Switzerland. It is the 24th annual award sponsored by Ciba-Geigy. ...and to **Orion Samuelson** (WGN/Tribune Radio Network, Chicago, IL) who addressed Soil Conservation Service employees November 5 in USDA's Jefferson Auditorium in Washington, D.C. Orion's topic was "Is There Still a Field of Dreams."

Farm Broadcasters Letter



Office of Public Affairs
 Radio-TV Division
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
 Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
 Penalty for Private Use \$300

CORN HARVEST IS LATE...due to a delayed start and slow development during the year, but field conditions are allowing producers to make headway before snow arrives, says **Joe Gangwish** (KMMJ, Grand Island, NE). Some sections of the state are reporting record yields. Joe says winter wheat is in the ground but it needs moisture.

AGNET...the American Agricultural Network, Houston, TX ceased TV transmission November 2, 1992. **Mike Miller**, former program director, says he's not aware of any plans to resume telecasting on the network.

PROMOTION...of **Gary Truitt** (AgriAmerica Network, Indianapolis, IN) to general manager has been announced by **Chris Duffy**, president of Wabash Valley Broadcasting. Gary will continue his broadcasts on the network.

VIC POWELL *Vic Powell*
 Chief, Radio and TV Division